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## Myanmar Situation Update (20-26 June 2022)

Ousted President U Win Myint, ousted State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and former Union Minister U Min Thu pleaded not guilty to the charge under Section 130(a) of Myanmar's penal code for allegedly influencing the Union Election Commission (UEC) in connection with the November 2022 general election. A crime management meeting will be held at the special court in the new detention facility in Naypyitaw on 1 July 2022 in relation to the charges against them.

Aung San Suu Kyi has already been sentenced to 11 years in prison for six charges. She was transferred from house arrest to prison and is being held in solitary confinement in Naypyitaw Prison on 22 June.<sup>1</sup>

The junta's trial of Australian economist Sean Turnell, meanwhile, will also be transferred to a special court inside a prison compound in the Naypyitaw.<sup>2</sup>

Former Yangon Region finance minister Ye Min Oo was sentenced to 15 years in prison, three years for each of the five counts of corruption charges. The junta accused Ye Min Oo of handing out corrupt loans to businesses when he chaired the Naypyitaw Development Bank.<sup>3</sup>

The junta-appointed UEC said that the election will be held using the proportional representation (PR) system and that there would be no referendum on the matter. U Khin Maung Oo, a member of UEC, said that four rounds of meetings with major political parties regarding the election were held where most of the parties agreed to adopt "Closed List PR". The election law, bylaws and regulations were also amended in order to employ the system. There are currently 92 political parties registered with the National Election Committee (NEC), 85 parties of which have been audited and eight political parties including the National League for Democracy (NLD) are yet to be audited.<sup>4</sup>

The junta Defence Minister General Mya Tun Oo joined the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia despite pressure from some countries in the regional bloc and pro-democracy groups to exclude the junta from such gatherings. ASEAN has only ever excluded junta

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<sup>1</sup><https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/daw-aung-san-suu-kyi-arrived-to-hearing-from-npt-prison-while-u-win-myint-arrived-from-outside>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220622-myanmar-junta-trial-of-australian-economist-shifted-to-prison-complex-source>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/former-yangon-finance-minister-sentenced-by-myanmar-junta-for-corruption.html>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/myanmar-junta-says-election-will-be-held-under-pr-system-no-referendum>

leader Min Aung Hlaing and the junta's foreign minister from international summits.<sup>5</sup>

The Myanmar junta urged ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) who did not participate in earlier peace talks to register by 30 June, inviting leaders and decision-makers to attend the talks along with two members.<sup>6</sup> In May, Min Aung Hlaing met with a number of EAOs where a second round of peace talks with signatories and non-signatories of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) were held on 14 June.

A junta delegation to Russia's economic forum held late last week discussed collaboration on nuclear technology with a state-owned atomic energy agency, according to military-run media. During the Russia trip, multiple discussions and agreements were held concerning petrol supply and power generation in Myanmar, with the coup council officials reportedly discussing "long-term cooperation" with Russia to meet energy needs.<sup>7</sup>

The junta stepped up import controls by banning imports of cars and other nonessential goods as the country struggles with a severe foreign-currency shortage caused by declines in investment and assistance from overseas.<sup>8</sup>

The National Unity Government (NUG) asked the international community to urgently provide material support to help end the junta's daily atrocities and violence against the people, as the death toll exceeded 2,000 last week.<sup>9</sup> In western Rakhine state, residents are worried about the possible escalation of violence between the military and the Arakan Army as arrests of personnel from both sides increase.<sup>10</sup>

United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar Thomas Andrews called on the international community to put more pressure on the Myanmar junta as the ongoing crisis in the country has claimed the lives of over 2,000 civilians. He also called on all UN member states to engage with the NUG in order to better understand the perspective of the people of Myanmar.<sup>11</sup>

The NUG announced the creation of its own digital currency, available through its own mobile payment system. The NUGPay payment system is available in Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, South Korea, Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States and is expected to be extended to other countries in the near future.<sup>12</sup>

NUG will carry out a census of migrant workers abroad and issue Overseas Employment Registration Cards by the end of June 2022. About 10% of the Myanmar population is working

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/myanmar-minister-attends-asean-defence-meeting-despite-calls-exclude-junta>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bionline.net/en/news/regimes-second-invite-peace-talks-falls-flat-some-myanmars-biggest-eaos>

<sup>7</sup> <https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/myanmar-junta-discusses-nuclear-technology-with-russian-atomic-energy>

<sup>8</sup> <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Myanmar-Crisis/Myanmar-blocks-car-luxury-imports-amid-foreign-currency-crunch>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmars-shadow-govt-urges-intl-community-to-step-up-support.html>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/rakhine-06242022161713.html>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.thestar.com.my/aseanplus/aseanplus-news/2022/06/25/united-nations-urges-international-community-to-step-up-pressure-on-myanmar-junta-engage-with-nug>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.laprensalatina.com/parallel-government-in-myanmar-creates-own-digital-currency/>

abroad. Many migrant workers from Myanmar work in Thailand, both legally and illegally.<sup>13</sup>

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Regional Director for the Asia Pacific Christine Cipolla visited Myanmar from 15-18 June for meetings with State Administration Council ministries, including the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Ministry of Health. The meetings followed up on key humanitarian concerns and requests expressed by ICRC President Peter Maurer during his visit to Myanmar in June 2021.<sup>14</sup> The military council, in a statement, said they denied ICRC's requests for them and the families of detainees to visit prisons.<sup>15</sup>

A new non-profit organization headed by cross-party Japanese lawmakers and others aims to raise funds to directly aid people suffering in Myanmar, while also lobbying for a return to democracy in the wake of a February 2021 military coup. The Myanmar International Assistance Organization plans to work with local NGOs that have better access to deliver supplies including food and medicine, and intends to work across borders with the Japan-Myanmar Friendship Association, the Thai-Japan Education Development Foundation and other entities. According to the UN special envoy of the secretary general on Myanmar, some 14.4 million people, about 25% of the country's population, urgently need humanitarian assistance.<sup>16</sup>

As of 24 June 2022, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) recorded that 2,021 people have been killed by the junta since the coup. There are 11,217 people currently under detention. There are 115 people who have been sentenced to death.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup><https://www.mizzima.com/article/nug-will-carry-out-migrant-census-and-issue-overseas-employment-registration-cards>

<sup>14</sup><https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/icrc-regional-director-asia-pacific-visits-myanmar>

<sup>15</sup><https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/junta-refuses-icrc-request-visit-prisoners-and-allow-prison-visitors>

<sup>16</sup><https://japantoday.com/category/national/japan-npo-aims-to-deliver-for-people-suffering-under-myanmar-junta>

<sup>17</sup><https://aappb.org/?p=21868>